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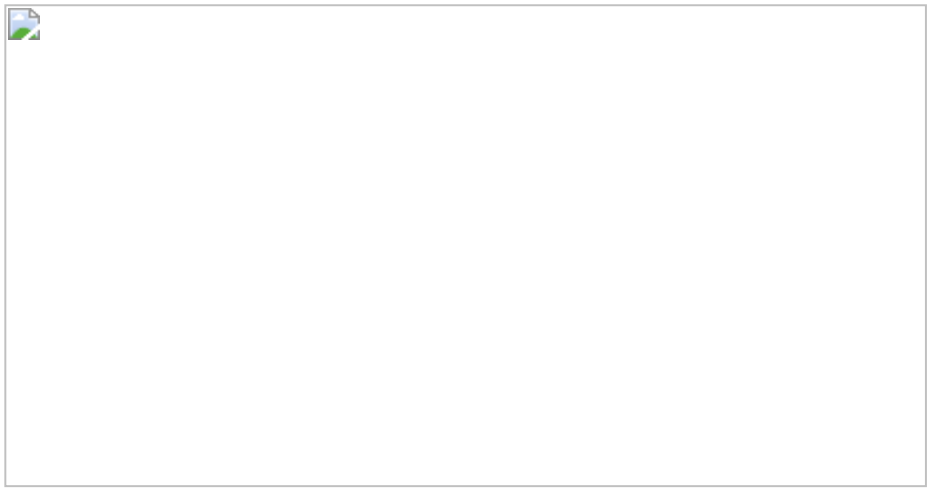

The Hobo Ethical Code of 1889: 15

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in *History*, *Life* | November 18th, 2016 9 Comments

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Who wants to be a billionaire?

A few years ago, *Forbes* published author Roberta Chinsky Matuson's sensible advice to businesspersons seeking to shoot up that golden ladder. These lawful tips espoused such familiar virtues as hard work and community involvement, and as such, were easily adaptable to the rabble—artists, teachers, anyone in the service industry or non-profit sector...

It must pain her that so many billionaires have been behaving so badly of late. Let's hope so, anyway.

While there's nothing inherently wrong with aspiring to amass lots of money, the next generation

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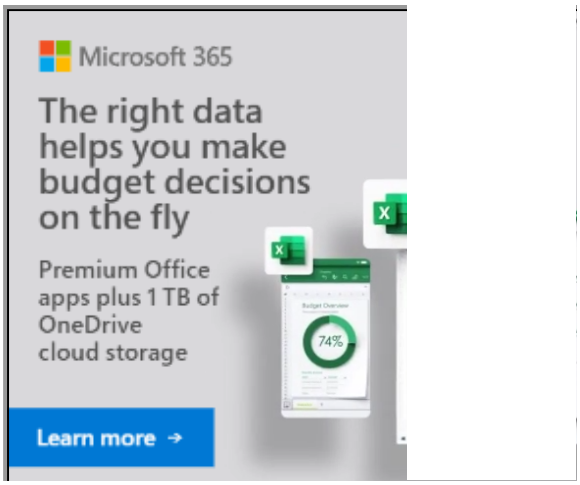
of billionaires are playing fast and loose with their souls if their primary role models are the ones dominating today's headlines.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Wouldn't it be grand if they looked instead to the Hobo Ethical Code, a serious standard of behavior established at the Hobo National Convention of 1889.

Given the peripatetic lifestyle of these migratory workers, it was up to the

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individual to hold him or herself to this knightly standard. Hoboes prided themselves on their self-reliance and honesty, as well as their compassion for their fellow humans.

The environment and the most vulnerable members of our society stand to benefit if tomorrow's billionaires take it to heart.

The Hobo Ethical Code

1. Decide your own life; don't let another person run or rule you.

2. When in town, always respect the local law and officials, and try to be a gentleman at all times.

3. Don't take advantage of someone who is in a

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vulnerable situation, locals or other hobos.

4. Always try to find work, even if temporary, and always seek out jobs nobody wants. By doing so you not only help a business along, but ensure employment should you return to that town again.

5. When no employment is available, make your own work by using your added talents at crafts.

6. Do not allow yourself to become a stupid drunk and set a bad example for locals' treatment of other hobos.

7. When jungling in town, respect handouts, do not wear them out, another hobo will be coming along

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who will need them as badly, if not worse than you.

8. Always respect nature, do not leave garbage where you are jungling.

9. If in a community jungle, always pitch in and help.

10. Try to stay clean, and boil up wherever possible.

11. When traveling, ride your train respectfully, take no personal chances, cause no problems with the operating crew or host railroad, act like an extra crew member.

12. Do not cause problems in a train yard, another hobo will be coming along

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who will need passage through that yard.

13. Do not allow other hobos to molest children; expose all molesters to authorities...they are the worst garbage to infest any society.

14. Help all runaway children, and try to induce them to return home.

15. Help your fellow hobos whenever and wherever needed, you may need their help someday.

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Ayun Halliday is an author, illustrator, theater maker and Chief Primatologist of the East Village Inky zine. Her play Zamboni Godot is opening in New York City in March 2017. Follow her @AyunHalliday.

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Randy says:
November 18, 2016 at 10:34 am

You're seriously promoting bigotry as ethical?

Reply

Colin Wills says:
November 18, 2016 at 11:34 am

Bigotry? Intolerance towards people who hold different views to yourself? Can't really see much evidence of that in the above.

Reply

Sting says:
November 19, 2016 at 6:07 am

What a great message.... in a bottle.

Reply

Hoki says:
November 20, 2016 at 1:09 am

Cannot read any part of this which promotes bigotry. You obviously

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have no idea what it actually means.

Reply

Audge ratt says:
May 29, 2017 at 1:16 am

Beautiful reading. Guidelines to adopt into our own lives wherever we be..

Reply

ambrit says:
May 29, 2017 at 9:25 pm

We are seeing a lot more than the usual number of homeless and transient here in the Deep South. I know locals who are squatting or sleeping in autos. To hold to a code of ethics requires both strong character and outside support. Funny but it's the poor amongst us who are holding up ethics as a good in and of itself.

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Jerry says:
May 4, 2018 at 9:41 am

They need something to rely on, even if it's for their own sanity. And following a code implies belonging to something, a group. My 2 cents.

Reply

Michael says:
May 4, 2018 at 11:38 am

When it comes to billionaires and ethics… There's a lot of people that don't get it… That these guys are playing for keeps. That they are going after YOU. That they are not gonna leave any little bit left for you. There's only one thing that the ruling circles throughout history have ever wanted, and that's EVERYTHING. There's only one thing they want – ALL the wealth, the treasures,

Alan Lomax Blues & Folk Archive

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and the profitable returns, ALL the choice lands an forests and game and herds and harvests and mineral deposits and precious metals of the earth, ALL the productive facilities and gainful inventiveness and technologies, ALL the control positions of the state and other major institutions. ALL public supports and subsidies, privileges and immunities, ALL the protections of the law and none of it's constraints. ALL the services and comforts and luxuries and advantages of civil society with nine of the taxes and none of the costs.

Every ruling class in history has wanted only this – ALL the rewards and NONE of the burdens. Their operational code is –

Billy Wilder

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‘We have a lot, we can get more, we want IT ALL.

Reply

BillGates says:
May 8, 2018 at 3:22 am

Anyone with less money than me is a Hobo.

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